Cotton Production

6023. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the cotton production is much below the expectation during 1993-94;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons therefor;

(c) whether cotton crop was affected due to the heavy rains and floods in Punjab and about 57 thousand hetrs. was affected by American bollworm disease which spread like wild fire affecting mainly the Juhurar variety of cotton;

(d) if so, what is the total loss of production as a result of the disease;

(e) how much loss is due to flood and how much loss in production has been estimated during 1993-94;

(f) to what extent it is less in comparison to 1992-93;

(g) whether it has also been estimated that the cotton crop in the current year would be much less than during 1992-93; and

(h) if so, what are the steps being taken to improve the production of cotton?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) The production of cotton is expected to be around 118.55 lakh bales (of 170 kgs each); though lower than the target of 125 lakh bales for 1993-94, yet it would be a record production.

(b) The main reasons for cotton production to be less than the target during 1993-94 is attributed to pests (Heliothis) attack on cotton crop as well as flood loss in Punjab.

(c) to (e) Exact loss of cotton production separately on account of floods/ heavy rains and as a result of disease has not been made. As per the present assessment, the production of cotton in Punjab is expected to be around 17.27 lakh bales, lower by about 6.73 lakh bales than the target of 24.00 lakh bales set for 1993-94.

(f) The production of cotton in Punjab is expected to be lower by 5.87 lakh bales than its production of 23.14 lakh bales during 1992-93.

(g) No, Sir. Despite set-back to cotton production in Punjab, the production of cotton in the country during 1993-94 is expected to be higher than that in 1992-93.

(h) Government of India is providing financial assistance to the States under Intensive Cotton Development Programme (ICDP) on seeds, plant protection equipments, sprinklers etc., besides organising field demonstrations and farmers' training in order to improve the productivity and production of cotton.

Legislation for Tobacco Farmers

6024. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Agriculture has interacted with the Ministry of Healh and Family Welfare in the last three years over any proposed legislation affecting tobacco farmers;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what observations were made by the Ministry of Agriculture in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI ARVIND NETAM): (a) Ministry of Agriculture has interacted with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on the comprehensive anti-tobacco legislation. This Ministry also participated in National Conference on "Tobacco or Health" organised by Health Ministry in collaboration with WHO in July, 1991.